Amiga Random-Monthly gaming magazine!
Issue 8 - Dec 2015 - A Comiga Publication

880 Gamer

Get a boost with Lotus Turbo Challenge!



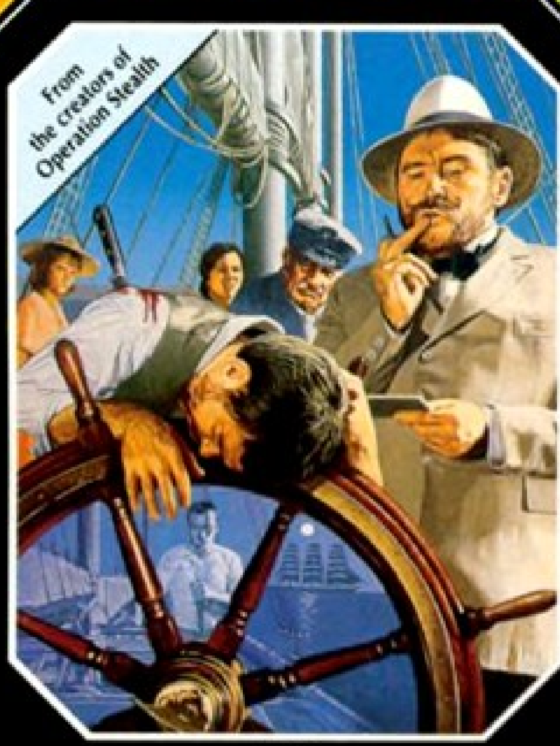


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Belial!
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Cartoons!
Painting!
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THE MARK

CRUISE FOR A CORPSE



AMIGA



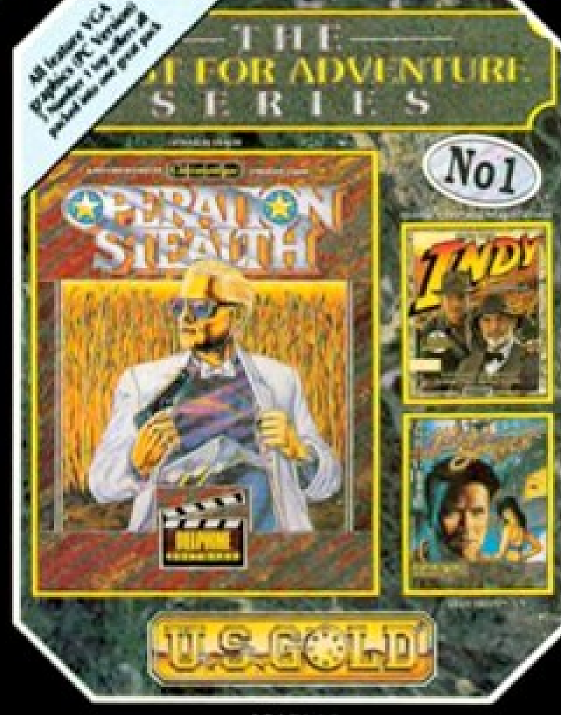
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OF A WINNER

THE GODFATHER™ – ACTION GAME





AMIGA



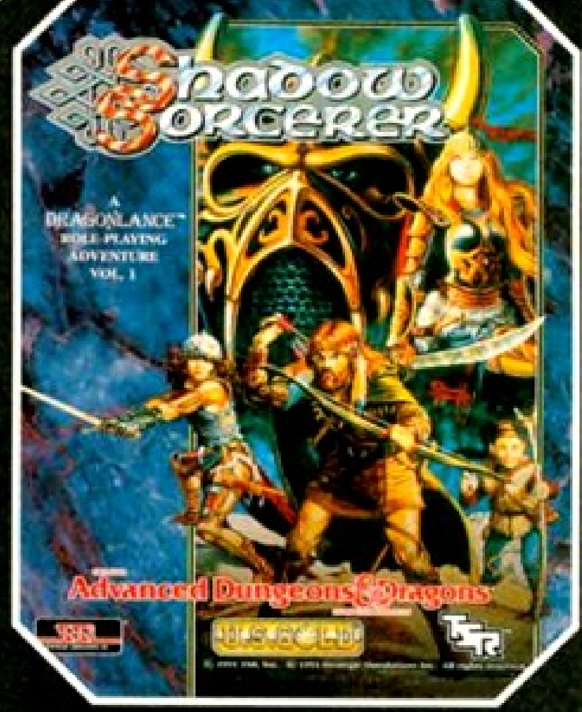
THE GODFATHER™ - THE ACTION GAME

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SHADOW SORCERER

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>>start 880

I love cars. I love Japanese pocket rockets, to American muscle, and I even love my horrible Australian car (it's not a bad car, just I treat it very rough… time and abuse has not been kind to it). It has not always been this way though. There was a time I did not really have much of an interest in cars during my youth, I had model cars and Hot Wheels, but for me it was more about playing with them than the actual car. Then one day I loaded up this game called Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge, and instantly both me and my dad were hooked! A friend came over and asked what we were playing, and I started telling him it was a Lotus Esprit Turbo, with a mid mounted intercooled turbo 4 cylinder engine with a top speed of 168mph… and on I went. He just wanted to know what this cool game was, but I was more excited about the car in the game from watching the rolling introduction hundreds of times.

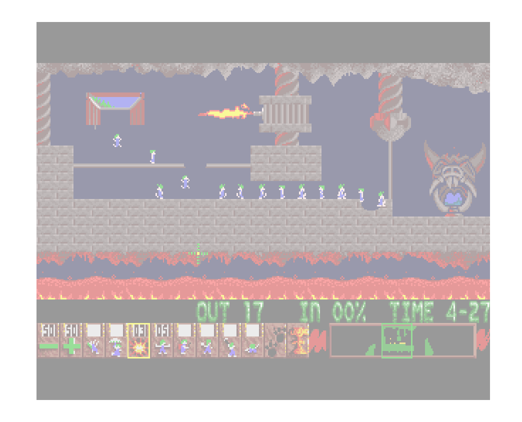
It was this game that got me to really start appreciating cars for their details, and not just because they look cool, and so I was very excited to revisit this great game for this issue. The Amiga can also be blamed for my other automotive love. You see, when I discovered the demo scene I was instantly hooked. A big part of my addiction is because of the electronica music that adorns these which rely heavily on thumping beats and phat bass! So naturally this love of spine tingling bass eventually resulted in me owning a stereo worth more than my car, and a sub woofer bigger than my spare tyre! So naturally we will have some cranking tunes lined up in this issues Bleeding Eyes.

But it's not all fast cars and thumping tunes this issue. We have our first reader requested review, which has me really scared that perhaps people might start using this as a means to torture me by making me play games that challenge my sanity. This issues inaugural game is Belial, a game so amazingly bad at ripping off other games and music, I almost feel ashamed to be Australian where it was created! We also had a second request which I thought was a great idea since it is Christmas, and that was to review the Cartoon Classics Amiga 500+ pack. I have a feeling a lot of you out there might have wound up having this under your Christmas tree, so we take a look at everything the pack had to offer! And just in case you have been living under a rock the last month, you probably have not been able to avoid the hype train that is known as Star Wars! While we are now up to movie number 7, we go right back to where it all started with the game based on the original movie.

So get your leather racing gloves out, zip up your space suit and turn the volume all the way up to 10 for this Christmas issue of 880 Gamer! Wishing you all out there in Amiga land a fantastic Christmas no matter where you are, and an equally wonderful new year! Hope to see you all again in the new year as we get closer to double digits for 880 Gamer issues! Thank you all for your support this year!

Mark Stanner
Editor and 'GO SLOW GO!' Slow Racer!

880 contents









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Screenshots from ST version

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880 cover disk

Fast cars and fast dogs? It's the battle of speed!





This issues demo disk is all about speed, with the third title from the famous Lotus trilogy teaming up with the even faster Tearaway Thomas! So suit up, strap in, and don't forget to bring your doggie poop bag for two of the fastest games to ever grace the Amiga!

LOTUS III







This issue we are reviewing the original Lotus game from the famous trilogy, but here we are giving you the chance to jump into the future and play the third game, 'The Ultimate Challenge'. The first half of this short demo is a non interactive sequence which shows off the new custom track building abilities, but after it has finished creating the futuristic track the game is all yours to play! In this level you will see some of the new features like the turbo pads (orange sections of track) which give you a big speed boost, while laser beams also shoot across the track slowing your car if you hit them in other sections. It's all a bit whacky but in the spirit of good fun!

Tearaway Thomas



Tearaway Thomas requires special preparation before you start playing. What is this you ask? Is it doing warm ups by stretching your muscles? No. Body, mind and soul training like Bruce Lee? That will probably help, but this will still not be enough. No, I recommend in preparation for playing Tearaway Thomas you you drink about 5 litres of the strongest and darkest coffee you can buy, and then wash it all down with a couple of Red Bulls for good measure.

With your blood now appropriately caffeinated, you can take on the role of the extremely hyperactive dog in Tearaway Thomas. This little demo will give you a taste of the speed you can expect in the full game, and there is more than one level to play through. Just completing this demo will be a big enough challenge! Remember, it's a race against the clock to collect enough gems and then find the exit, and while hitting the dangerous wildlife will not actually hurt you, it will cost you precious seconds!

880 pause screen

Each issue we will take a visual look back at special moments in Amiga games that will remain with us always. Here we take a look at the amazing Shadow Of The Beast opening level which amazed us all the first time we laid eyes on it, and it's new remake which is drawing a lot of inspiration from it as you can see when placed side by side.



Game On!

Fast shiny red cars.... sooooo shiny....

It's game review time, so lets get Racing! But first, a few house rules on how we review games here at 880:

- Always use your turn signal and wear your seatbelt!
- Games are played in emulation and not on real Amiga's. This is to judge a game on its own merits and not the limitations of long load times, never ending disk swaps (I'm looking at you Street Fighter II) and for all those whiz bang 3D games that were just never going to run even on the most powerful machines (COUGH!... Alien Breed 3D 2 COUGH!)
- The release date will be taken into consideration when reviewing since games advanced in leaps and bounds both graphically and sonically year on year, but if we think it looks crap we are still going to say it!
- If there are multiple versions available (eg. A500 / A1200) then each will be compared based on the single review and differences in scores awarded based on each version.
- All games are played on an evil kitten fuelled PC responsible for the death of the Amiga, although we lessen the evil by using penguin friendly Ubuntu with FS-UAE.
- And what about fabulous prizes I hear you ask? How about...



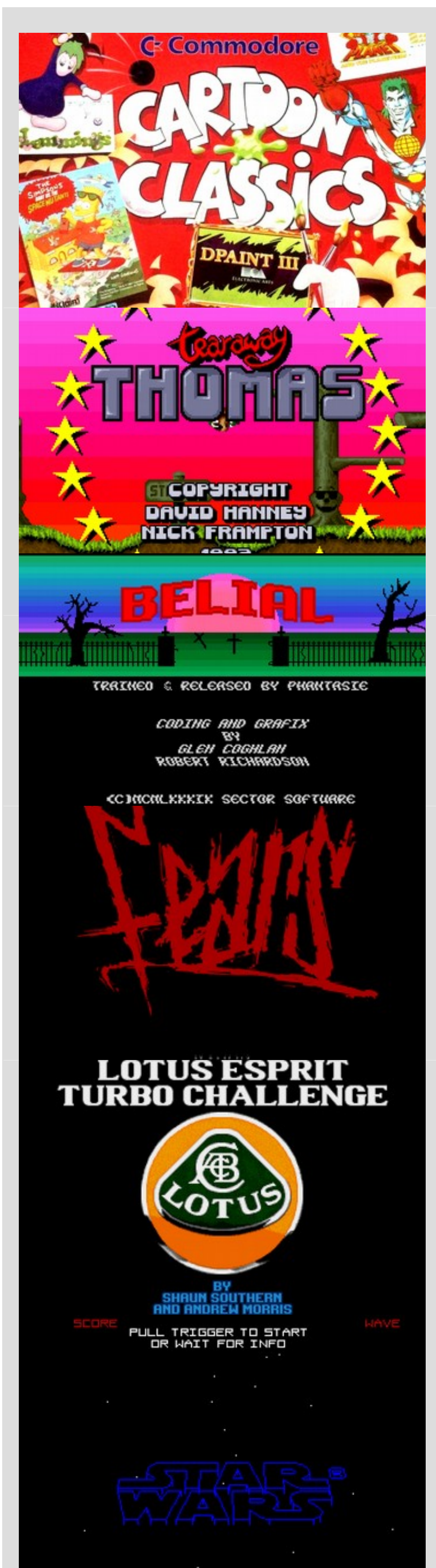
If it's brilliant and scores 90% or higher, then we break out the big gold bars! It shines as brilliantly as your freshly carnauba wax polished red Lotus Esprit Turbo which you spent all day polishing, only to have it rain anyway. ***sigh***



If its still a decent play with a score of 80% or higher then it is still worthy of some sterling silver. As shiny as the rims on your brand new Lotus Esprit Turbo, and probably worth just as much!

Game On!

From classics to craptastics! Take your pick!



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ROTOSCAPE combines the colourful detail of large sprites with the complete freedom to move around a background of polygon constructed landscapes. Watch in amazement as this detailed background zooms, scrolls and rotates through 360° around you, giving an incredibly lifelike feel to the game.



Screen shots from Atari ST version





Screen shots from Amiga version



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CARTOON CLASSICS

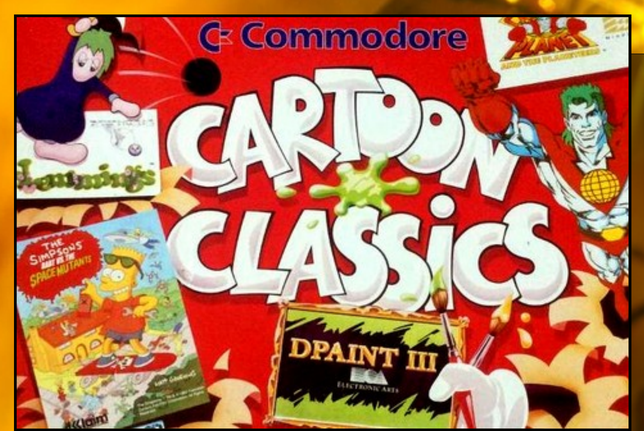
Although we already have one reader choice for a game review this issue, Daniel also sent us a unique request which was the Cartoon Classics Amiga pack, and like all the rules around here we are always looking for ways to bend them beyond recognition and generally just destroy them! So while this would result in breaking our rule by having two reader review requests this issue, the team decided after a very long (and boozy) x-mas lunch... what the heck! Let's do it!

The reason for this was simple. Firstly, it gave us a great excuse to have another go on that all-time classic game Lemmings, but I also suspect this pack would have ended up under a lot of Christmas trees for pimple laden teens like me bugging their parents every five minutes to buy an Amiga, so this all ties in nicely with this year's Christmas edition. Maybe you yourself got one of these packs for Christmas? Let us know!

Now, a little bit about this review. Firstly, we are not going to go Titanic deep with each game as this is a review on the pack as a whole. We will also give a total score for the entire pack which includes the hardware. That's right, we are going to also take a quick look at the great machine bundled in the box as well!

So put up some Christmas decorations, try to find that blown light bulb in your Christmas lights (Hell yeah! Pre-LED - hot as hell - house burning down Christmas lights! Good times! ED.), and break out the Christmas carols mixtape as we dive into one of the best Christmas gifts any Amiga fan could ever get! And for those wanting the full 90s experience, break out the ozone destroying CFC aerosol cans of fake snow along with fake pine tree aroma for extra effect!





WHAT IS THE CARTOON CLASSICS PACK?

If there was one thing Commodore was good at, it was putting their computers together with tempting packs which made bargain savvy shoppers feel like they were getting the deal of a lifetime! One of these was the Cartoon Classics pack released in July 1992, combining three popular games along with the more serious Electronic Arts 'Deluxe Paint III' (What? EA made serious software? I thought they only made endless FIFA games along with a million different versions of Need For Speed? Ed.) This pack also served another purpose which was to introduce the A500-Plus to the world. Looking like a normal A500, it introduced a few new features which, while not groundbreaking, were still part of an evolutionary step for the Amiga. Since the main reason you would have been buying this pack was to get an actual Amiga, we will start off our reviews with the hardware…



AMIGA 500 PLUS

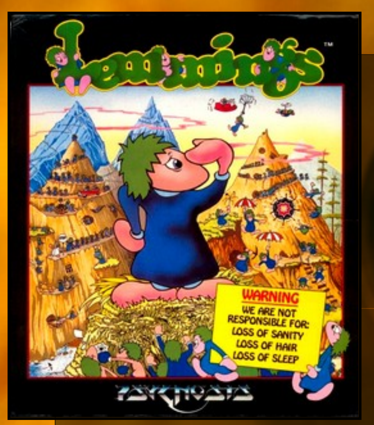
Pulling the A500-Plus out of its box, you would certainly wonder what made it different to your bog standard A500 because, with the exception of the A500-Plus badge, it looks identical to its predecessor. It's still beige, it still has a floppy drive and lots of plugs on the back, and it still makes that annoying clicking sound when no disk is in the drive! So what's the deal?

Well for starters, if you insert a "1MB only" game into this machine you will find it loads up no problem. So what you ask? Well, it does this straight out of the box without adding an expanded memory board like you normally would have to. That's right, it has 1MB as standard which a lot of games were requiring by that time. Also, just like a lot of expansion cards you could buy, it also had a battery backup clock. Maybe not very exciting for all you gamers out there, but a great feature at the time if ever you used Workbench.

Speaking of Workbench, this also gets a much-needed update from the V1.3 to V2.04. The joy of no longer having the eye bending colour scheme of Blue and orange, replaced by a more professional looking and subdued grey toned Workbench. It's not just only eye candy, Amiga OS 2.04 adds a lot of new features which vastly improves the user experience while keeping all of its multi-tasking glory. There are some other hardware changes to the custom chips as well which all sounds nice, but to your average game player like you and me, let's face it, you are not going to know any different! Finally, a revised design internally had the finance department at Commodore rubbing their hands together with glee!

It was a hardware revision to lower the manufacturing costs, but oddly it actually included substantial improvements to hardware chips and the operating system. Why is this odd? Because Commodore only sold this machine for 6 months prior to discontinuing it and replacing it with the A600. People despised the A600 for not having a numeric keypad and not really advancing the hundred series, while the original A500 was feeling dated with its older operating system and lower base memory. So I guess the A500-Plus can be viewed as the best 'hundred' series in the Amiga family. It was capable out of the box without an expansion card. It had a vastly improved OS experience. It had the word "PLUS" making you feel superior to your friend who only had a bog standard A500! It came with bragging rights! That alone made it worth the purchase!

94%



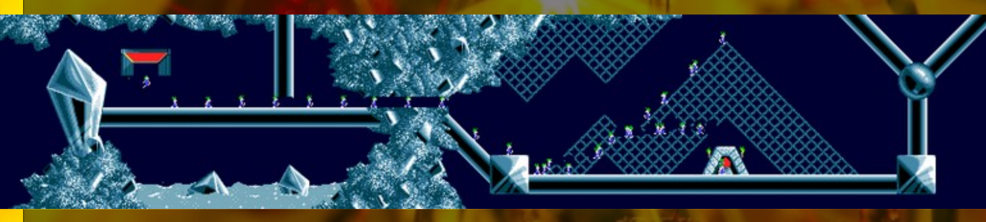
Lemmings

GOLD!

Even to this day, Lemmings still shines brightly as one of the greatest and most enjoyable puzzle games ever made. In fact, if you simply changed the end of each level screen to give a three star rating like many of today's mobile device puzzle games, you would have a hard time believing it is now 24 years old! Except this is a lot more fun than today's games because it comes from a time when games were devoid of adverts and cash sucking microtransactions! Sigh… I miss those days!



The concept for those who have never played Lemmings is simple. You have to get your slightly suicidal blue and green furry friends from their starting point to an exit somewhere in the level, while preventing as many of them meeting their doom as possible. Not an easy task when there can be up to 99 of the critters running around, all eager to find cliffs to jump off, water to drown in, or even be burnt to a crisp among many other things. To help with this, you are given a number of tools and actions for your lemmings, such as building steps, bashing through walls, or even digging, but not all of these are always available, and sometimes in very limited quantities which is where the puzzle element comes into it. Thankfully, the game has a great learning curve, with the earlier levels easing you into the game perfectly.



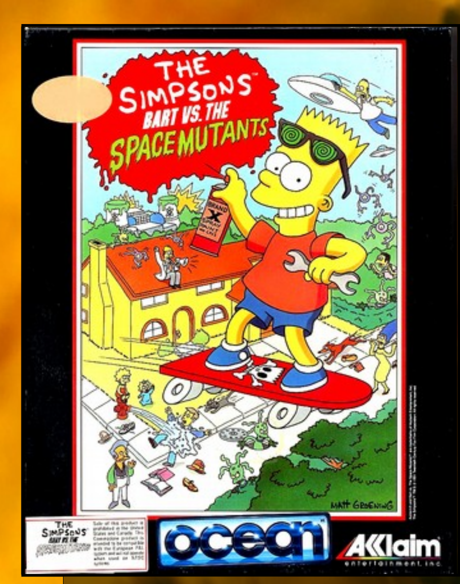
Lemmings looks great. From the wonderful introduction to the big puzzling levels that sprawl across multiple screen widths, everything looks really polished and well animated, with great use of bright fun colours throughout. The music and sounds also get the same level of attention, with enjoyable light hearted music throughout the game and great use of sound effects. I still feel guilty each time I select a lemming to blow up, only to hear his little squeaky voice call out in disbelief “Oh Nooo!”.

Lemmings is a wonderful game, and one of the most important games of all time for its genre. Even today, it is great fun and wonderfully challenging, and while looking back on some older games it can sometimes be easy to fault them, I can honestly say I can not fault this game in any way. An essential game in any Amiga gamers collection and a great addition to the Cartoon Classics pack.



97%





The Simpsons
Bart VS The Space Mutants

It is amazing to think that The Simpsons cartoon is almost as old as the Amiga itself, and even to this day they are still creating new episodes. Naturally, since The Simpsons was one of the biggest things around during the early 90s, the Amiga received a couple of Simpsons games during its life, and here we have Bart Versus The Space Mutants which ties in very nicely with the theme of the Cartoon Classics pack.



At first glance, it looks like a very simple arcade platform game, however, you need to use a lot more thought in this game compared with others. As an example, in the first level you must paint anything purple. This seems easy at first with your trusty spray can, but some of the methods are not so straight forward, like having to kick a rolling ball up at a can of paint which then falls onto the purple veranda painting it red. But it's not all painting stuff, as you progress through the levels new challenges are presented such as stealing everyone's hats. All this is in the name of preventing an alien invasion.

The game comes with an extremely slick introduction with great animation and sounds lifted straight from the cartoon. The game itself looks good, if not a little basic (but then, so is the cartoon), with plenty of references to the cartoon littered throughout the game from characters to locations. The important part is it all runs very smooth and relatively playable, unlike Captain Planet which is also included in the pack. It provides simple run and jump action, but don't be fooled because this is one very tough game!



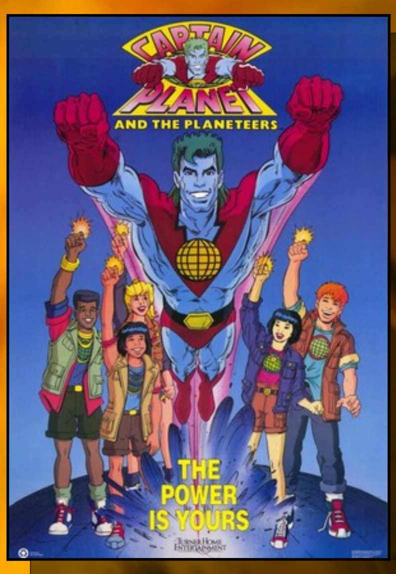
There are sound effects and in-game music, but even the biggest fan of The Simpsons will start to grow tired of listening to The Simpsons theme song looping non-stop through the entire game! Some original level tunes would have made a welcome addition. Sound effects are also extremely poor, sounding like they came direct from an 8-bit console at the time, which is odd after the extremely good introduction.

If you are a Simpsons fan, I don't think you are going to get a lot out of this game, but it is a bit of fun and a good challenge, with enough references to the cartoon to make it feel a little special. I think the animated introduction made it worthwhile enough to include in this pack.

73%







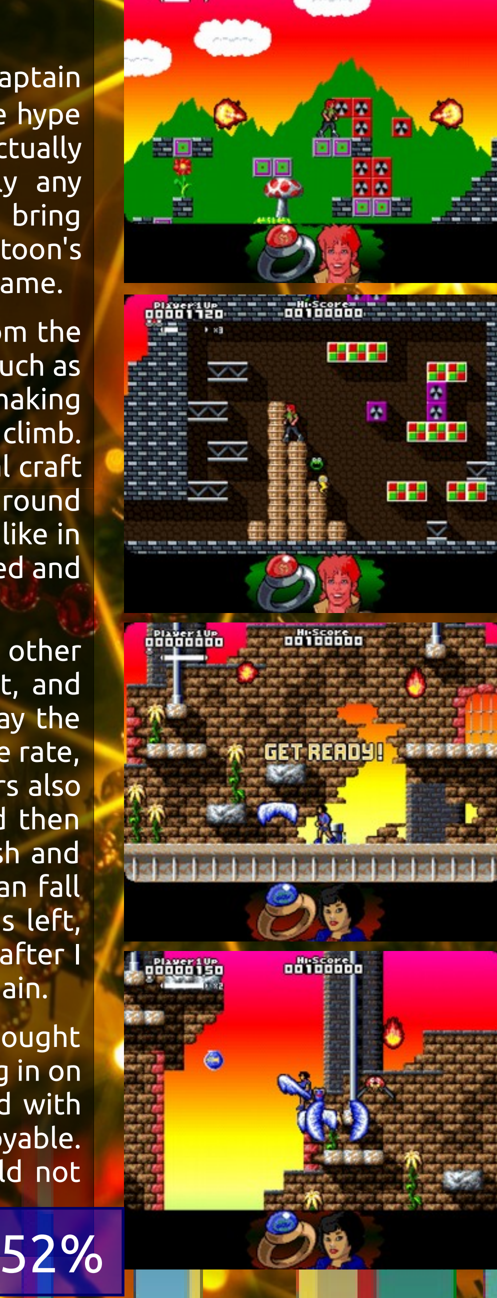
Captain Planet

I will admit that I missed the whole Captain Planet craze in the early 90s, so I don't have the hype machine blinding me from how bad this game actually is. Most cartoon/movie adaptations are rarely any good, and while Captain Planet attempts to bring some unique ideas revolving around the cartoon's story, ultimately it is a below average platform game.

You play each level as one of the Planeteers from the cartoon, each having their own unique abilities such as creating ice platforms to jump on, or even making vines grow tall into the air which you can then climb. You even get to fly around in their own personal craft like jets and submarines, allowing you to zip around the decently sized levels. Once you have completed all five characters, just like in the cartoon when they combine all their powers, Captain Planet is summoned and you finally get to play as him.

This variety of gameplay makes it refreshing when compared with all the other generic platform games where you simply collect gems and find the exit, and graphically it has some nice looking levels, but unfortunately once you play the game it all falls apart. The game is far from smooth with a very choppy frame rate, and this is made even worse due to the horrendous controls. The characters also feel like they are filled with helium. When you jump they slowly rise, and then float just as slowly back to earth, making the game feel extremely sluggish and hard to judge simple jumps. You seem to be able to run faster than you can fall which is very odd. Some poor level design then destroys what little fun is left, with one time I lost all my lives after becoming stuck on a pipe, each time after I died I simply started from the same point, still unable to move until I died again.

Captain Planet had some good ideas, and you can see they put a lot of thought into the game so it would not be just another generic platform game cashing in on the cartoons popularity. Unfortunately though, its poor controls combined with sluggish and choppy gameplay make for a game that is far from enjoyable. Captain Planet could save the world from pollution, but it seems he could not save this from been a below average game.



52%







Deluxe Paint III

The last piece of software included in the pack is not a game, but the popular Amiga painting application Deluxe Paint III. While the overall layout and usage remain very much unchanged, what makes this version of DPaint special was along with the host of new features it now also included the ability to create animations, which made it the perfect choice for inclusion with Cartoon Classics Pack.

While possible to animate each frame by hand, DPaint includes a lot of powerful tools which allows you to use animation brushes that you have created, and combining this with scripted movement you can preset, you can then let the Amiga animate for you resulting in nice fluid animations. You can even apply perspectives and zoom with rotation giving you a lot of flexibility, and with a little practice you can create some professional looking effects, or even titles to stick at the front of your home movies (Oh yeah! VHS forever man! Or bring on the Betamax! Ed.)

A host of other requested features also finally make it into this version, such as the ability to use overscan so you can abolish those horrible black borders, along with Extra Half-Brite mode which is especially useful for creating easy shadows, although HAM mode is still oddly missing. All up though, the painting additions alone make for a big improvement over previous versions, and the inclusion of animation as well makes this a truly exceptional painting application that will have you creating great animated sequences in no time.

For painting and combined animation features, there is nothing equal on the Amiga with the exception of later versions of DPaint, and this is a great inclusion in the pack for when you finally get bored with all the gaming and want to get creative yourself.

92%

The Final Verdict

This is a tremendous pack from Commodore showcasing some of the Amiga's strongest abilities, while also bringing some nice hardware improvements. While the A500 PLUS is a great machine, some will be quick to point out it did have some compatibility issues with older games, and frustratingly it still came with that massive RF-modulator which stuck out the back when using a normal TV set, but overall it is my pick of the A500 range and the last of its breed.

Looking at the games, I think it does a very good job at appealing to the target audience they were aiming for (young pimple laden teens like me). Lemmings is one of the greatest puzzle games on any platform, and even today it is a shining example of how to make a truly fun and addictive game. Both The Simpsons game and Captain Planet certainly have the pulling power of big name cartoons that were hugely popular for the time (heck, the Simpsons are still hugely popular!), but while the Simpsons is reasonably fun, Captain Planet really lets the pack down as the weakest inclusion in this pack. Even die hard Planteer fans would have trouble enduring this game through to the end credits!

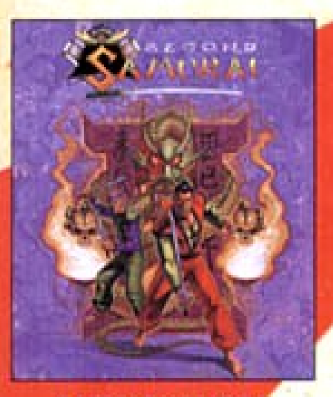
But just when things are starting to look a little shaky, Commodore go and throw in Deluxe Paint III which is one of the best creative painting applications on the Amiga. While not an obvious choice at first due to the arcade nature of the included games, when you start looking at its animation capabilities and the inspirational animated introduction for the Simpsons game, it soon becomes obvious that this is the perfect companion to the pack and elevates it well above other packs that included games only.

All up, this is a strong pack with some of the best software the Amiga has to offer with the exception of one game that lets the team down slightly. What seems like a limited idea for a pack actually turns out to be one with good variety with something that should appeal to everyone out there. Fun games and good times!

Silver

Total averaged score : 82%

A SEQUEL TO END ALL SEQUELS...



OUT NOVEMBER

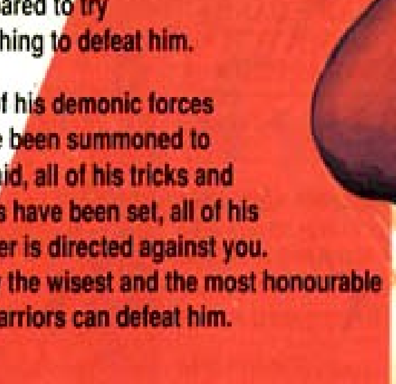


FOR THE AMIGA



After an epic struggle of good against evil, the Demon King sought refuge far away in time; where his magic was forgotten, and where he could lick his wounds and recover his powers.

Yet he had not counted on the will of a young Samurai warrior. He followed the Demon into 24th century Japan, to ancient Japan and finally, confronted the Demon in his mountain throne where the King was prepared to try anything to defeat him.

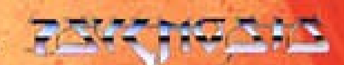


All of his demonic forces have been summoned to his aid, all of his tricks and traps have been set, all of his power is directed against you. Only the wisest and the most honourable of warriors can defeat him.



...the story of the second samurai is yet to be written

South Harrington Buildings, Sefton Street, Liverpool L3 4BQ United Kingdom Tel: 051 709 5755



- A500
- Global Software
- 1992



Have you ever played an old PC game on a new powerful machine, where it turbo charges it to a point where it is almost unplayable? If you have, then you have a pretty good idea how Tearaway Thomas plays! This is a bare-bones platform game where you jump across 50 levels collecting gems within a given time limit, complete with secret rooms and other nasty creatures to avoid. The difference with Tearaway is when you bump into your enemies you do not lose a life, energy, or gems. They simply slow you down costing you valuable seconds, and at the speed this game runs, a few seconds means a lot! A joystick is not really going to cut it here, you are best to go for a gamepad as the game is ridiculously fast to the point of insanity!

This speed though is what makes Tearaway fun. To be honest, the game is nothing special, but the element of speed and racing against the very short time limit for each level gives it something unique and challenging. While avoiding enemies is a must to keep your speed up, the biggest challenge is learning each level and the best way through it, collecting enough gems along the way to open the exit and beat the clock. Arrows point you in the right direction, which is handy as levels can be sprawling and vary in direction, with some going left or right, or even straight up, which makes a nice change to the traditional left to right format.

This is all brought together with simplistic graphics that are bright and colourful, and while not having much detail, everything zips past you so fast it's all a blur anyway. Having this uncluttered look helps so you do not become confused or distracted while trying to find your way to the exit. There are six worlds in total, each with their own theme such as Woodland and Toy Land, and as you progress through each world the levels change slightly using different colours, so it's hard to find two that look exactly the same preventing too much repetition. Enemies are also unique to each world, and all have a cute cartoon style fitting perfectly with the game along with nice animations.

There is music throughout the game which is ok-ish, and pretty much only a single sound effect as you pick up a gem. It's far from special, but the up-tempo music fits the fast pace of the game. That's pretty much all there is to Tearaway Thomas. It's a very basic and simple platform game, but its stupid speed makes it fun while not trying to be anything overly original. If you don't like platform games which require a lot of jumping or have not had your blood replaced by caffeine-rich coffee like me, you would probably be best to give this game a miss, but if you like fast paced platform games, then they don't come much faster or harder than this!



I guess I should go that way?

Houston, we have lift off!

When there somethin' strange, in your neighbourhood, who ya gona call......



Dreaming of a white Christmas?



Did we just warp to James Pond 2?



Tearaway Thomas

A500 - 1992

GRAPHICS	70%
SOUND	55%
GAMEPLAY	72%

While not very original, the stupid speed makes this a silly and fun game to play.

SCORE	71%

880 READER REQUEST

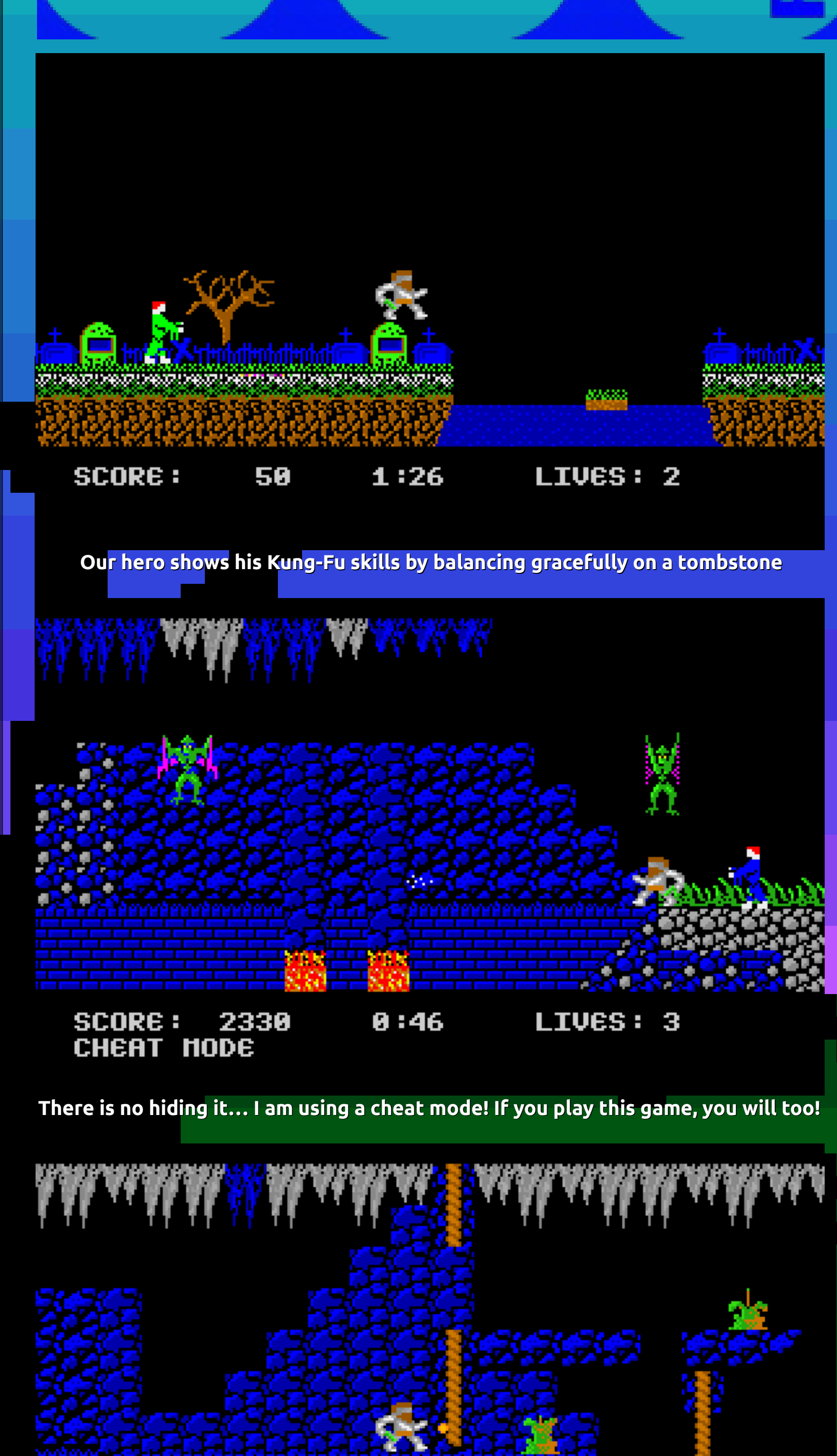
BELIAL

- A500
- ECP
- 1989

Our first ever reader request comes from Codetapper, who has asked if I would do the honour of reviewing Belial. Now I'm almost certain after playing this game, this is his twisted form of revenge for all the painful spelling errors I have put him through! I promise I will never confuse 'lose' and 'loose' again, just please make it stop! So accompanied by screams of pain emanating from deep within the 880 Gamer review torture chamber, let's get started with this issues ghoul-tastic spook-fest, Belial!

If you would like to know what playing Belial is like, simply close your eyes and imagine you are playing a below average copy of Ghosts 'n Goblins while listening to Kraftwerk's 'Das Model'. If you have managed to conjure up that image in your mind, then congratulations, you can skip to the final score below! To say this game is a blatant copy of the classic Ghosts 'n Goblins game is an understatement. From the graveyard setting and layout to even the basic colours used, when putting the two games side by side you wouldn't believe they are different games, but instead simply a conversion on a different platform. I say different platform because while I will grant Belial does run very smoothly, it certainly does not look like a 16-bit Amiga game! It is extremely harsh on the eyes, with some 8-bit games actually looking better!

Playing Belial requires simply running left to right, jumping, climbing, and shooting your way through spooky enemies like the walking dead and bouncing jack-o-lanterns, but this is made extremely hard for three reasons. Firstly, when you shoot, the game can only have one of your 'bullets' on screen at once, so if you miss your enemy you will have to painfully wait until your bullet disappears off the screen before you can fire again, which by that time you are normally dead. Secondly, when you do die (which you will often do), you won't simply restart playing from where you died or a recent checkpoint. You will, in fact, return to the very start of the level which is extremely infuriating. And thirdly, each level has a short time limit which means you have to make sure each play through is a speed run or it's game over!



Our hero shows his Kung-Fu skills by balancing gracefully on a tombstone

There is no hiding it... I am using a cheat mode! If you play this game, you will too!

Such amazing level detail and design quality! Remember, this is a 16-bit game...

WHO IS RIPPING WHO OFF?

Hidden deep within Belial's game code, Robert Richardson who coded Belial left a hidden message for any hackers looking to crack his game, which would ultimately result in many illegal copies getting out into the wild. The message reads as follows -

"Crackers and Ascii modifiers: don't stuff around with this game and definitely (sic) don't spread it around Australia. The Australian software market is too small already and spreading this game will probably stop us writing more software later. Overseas I don't care but not Australia... OK? Robert."

Despite his complete disregard for other software developers around the world, this would almost sound like a reasonable request if it was not for the fact that the game itself is the biggest copy of another popular game, namely the classic Ghosts'n'Goblins...





Here we have Ghosts'n'Goblins, and on the right Belial. Hmmm... It's uglier, but still a copy!

But why stop at only copying the game when you can also copy someone's music? Obviously they were having difficulty creating anything original musically, so the theme song that plays continuously throughout the game is a blatant copy of Kraftwerk's 'Das Model'.



While Robert may have not wanted anyone to copy his creation, it seems he was perfectly happy to copy other peoples work...



On my original version level 3 corrupted resulting in the techno spew you see here. While the level was corrupt, my character and enemies were not, so it was still possible to play, and truth be told... it was more fun to play like this! I think it almost looks better as well...

Speaking of levels, there are a whole three of them, with each having a time limit of one minute and thirty seconds. That means if you have the patience to endure Belial's hellish gameplay, and actually complete the game without taking the disk out and setting it on fire in a fit of rage, you can complete the whole game in around four minutes. The game keeps track of your score, but as there is no high score table and it resets when you restart, this is rendered completely pointless.

I am desperately trying to find something good about this game since it is our first reader request, but I am struggling! It is a blatant copy, with terrible graphics, horrendous gameplay and poor design, all wrapped up in one of the shortest games I have ever played. At least the music is half decent (even if this is a Kraftwerk copy with no sound effects), and since it is also made by an Australian group, I will swing them another 0.5%. Is it the worst game I have ever played? No. There are worse games out there, but is it fun and worth playing? No.

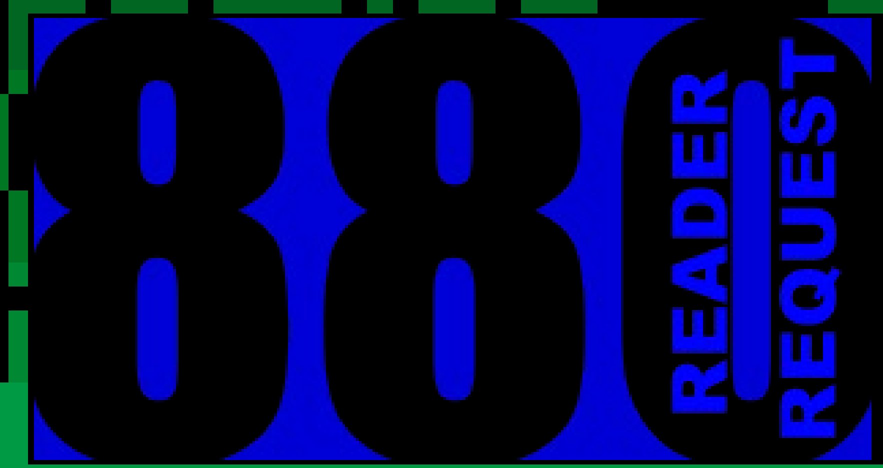
Belial

A500 - 1989

GRAPHICS	16%
SOUND	21%
GAMEPLAY	15%

As promised, an additional 0.5% for being Australian, but it's still a crap game!

SCORE 16.5%



Want to see your name up in lights? Or are you just sick of us reviewing games you don't care about? Well, here is your chance to take control of 880Gamer and tell us what game you want us to review! Simply email us the name of the game you would like to see reviewed in 880Gamer, and each issue we will pick one of the requests sent in. Will you pick a classic, or will you try to torture my soul even more than this issues game? It's your choice, so get thinking and send your Reader Request to :

880gamer@gmail.com


II
F-15
STRIKE EAGLE
II
SUPER
3-D
GRAPHICS
F15 Strike Eagle II
F15 Strike Eagle II is a whole new concept in computer air warfare. Dogfighting is the name of the game. The air swarms with enemy aircraft. Dice with death as you light your burners and head for the skies. Success depends on making the right moves – fast. Super smooth, non-stop action takes place over 250,000 square miles of authentic terrain. Superb, solid-filled polygon-based 3D graphics makes it feel as though you really are in the thick of the action. Hundreds of options, four difficulty levels and a vast amount of missions and scenarios make F15 Strike Eagle II perfect for dogfighting veterans and novices alike.
MICRO PROSE
SIMULATION • SOFTWARE
Unit 1, Hampton Road Industrial Estate, Tetbury, Glos.
Tel: 0666 504326/504412



A1200 / CD32 - Manyk - 1995



Big red buttons! You know you want to press it! Go on!

The Amiga was, and still is a great machine, capable of some impressive graphics and effects for its time. But one thing it could never match the PC at was the ability to produce those eye-popping 3D texture-mapped graphics, which were used in the flood of first person shooters that dominated the early 90s PC gaming scene. There were many promises made by developers to magically allow the Amiga to match their PC counterparts, but most of the time the end result never lived up to their claims, and so a small group of demo scene coders sought to right this wrong and bring to the Amiga an original 3D shooter we could all be proud of, regardless of how powerful your machine was, and so Fears was born.



Pop their tops to reveal their oddly tasty looking brains

Original this game is not. Looking down the barrel of your gun, you navigate the 3D texture mapped levels seeking out health packs and ammunition, killing monsters of the deep and discovering secret rooms, while frantically searching for switches to unlock doors blocking your way to the exit. This game does not try to bring anything new to the genre, but what it does bring is a full texture mapped FPS that runs at a decent speed, even on a basic unexpanded A1200. Even playing with full texture detail on the largest screen size possible, it always keeps a very playable pace, so you do not have to run around squinting at a screen the size of a postage stamp to make it playable like some other games. It does however look quite chunky, even with the dithering option switched on, and the draw distance is very limited in a view that is a narrower than normal, but with higher resolution graphics used for the heads up display and weapons overlaying the action, it manages a respectable and original look. The levels are also not just flat but offer multiple levels with stairways leading you up and down, although everything does look to be built around a big square grid resulting in limited and basic level design.



The ever handy 'you are here' map in Satan's supermarket



Creatures from your blocky pixelated nightmares!

Unfortunately, while Fears is technically impressive running on low spec machines, it does not mean it is an impressive game to play. The levels are not designed very well with enemies appearing behind practically every door you open, who immediately then shoot you making it impossible not to be hit or lose energy. Unlike other games, there is no suspense when you open a door, just the same repetitive thought of '*sigh*.. here we go again'. The other frustrating part is while the game allows you to side step, no matter how quickly you do this you hardly ever seem to be able to avoid being hit by the enemies fire. It becomes a case of always running towards the enemy with your guns blazing without even trying to avoid their fire, with no strategic movement or hiding around corners. The creators may have been impressive at coding, but it appears they did not have a lot of experience at creating excellent level design or balanced game-play.

Something that Fears does offer to extend its longevity is a level editor which allows you to create your own maps. This is a really nice addition, and while it takes a little practice to make anything half decent, it is not overly complicated allowing anyone to get creative. In regards to the artistic direction in the game, some people may find the creatures a little cartoonish for their taste, but in all honestly I actually like how they all look lending a more fun than serious feel to the game, and the remaining sound and presentation throughout the game is top notch looking very polished. Be warned though, if you have a seriously kitted out Amiga and you are expecting superior graphics, you will be disappointed because while you will get a much smoother frame rate, there are no options to increase the resolution or other details, so you will still have the same chunky graphics with limited draw distance.

I actually enjoy running around in Fears shooting everything like a madman for short bursts, but with poor level design and gameplay that needs fine tuning, it's just too hard and frustrating to enjoy long term, and this gives you no motivation to actually play it through to the end. A shame because this could have been the killer FPS the Amiga needed, but in the end it comes across more like an impressive tech demo only... which I guess makes sense since it did come from a bunch of demo scene coders after all.



Are those his nipples around his waist?

Just hanging out polishing my boom stick

Circular saw, life does not get much better

Bored of the included maps in Fears? Played them all and want more? Then create your own maps in the handy editor...

Bob the builder "CAN WE FIX IT!"...

Fill your map with all kinds of goodies!

Get the look! What's on trend with Fears.

Fears

A1200 / CD32 - 1995

GRAPHICS	84%
SOUND	75%
GAMEPLAY	63%

A FPS game with so much potential, let down by poor level and gameplay design.

SCORE	71%



LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE



A500 - Gremlin - 1990

For a game that features the word 'turbo' so prominently in its title, and even giving us a glimpse of the legendary Lotus Turbo power plant, I can't help but feel a little disappointed with the audio in this wonderful game because you never get to hear even the slightest hint of a turbo shrill. Instead, Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge suffers the same fate that afflicts many racing games even to this day. I talk of course about the dreaded vacuum cleaner engine sound! This is where you are driving an awesome powerhouse of a car, but it sounds more like a Hoover. If Super Hang On proves anything, a great turbo (or nitro) sound can really get the senses tingling. Maybe it's not authentic, but I doubt most racing tracks have roadworks and rocks on them, so sticking a wonderful high pitch turbo sound in there would not have felt out of place and would have given you a little thrill!



But enough complaining already, because Lotus is a great game! The cool thing about Lotus is it's a slightly serious circuit racer requiring actual pit stops for refuelling, but then drops this into a very enjoyable arcade racing game blending the two styles together perfectly. In single player mode, you have three championships you can race in, each with increasing difficulty and number of circuits. There is no timer to race against to the next checkpoint, however, you do have to get a top finishing position to continue, and if you run out of fuel it's also game over, so you need to keep a close eye on your fuel gauge. A helpful beeping sound when fuel is low assists while also getting the adrenaline pumping if you have a long way to the pit lane!

The opponents are not too bad giving the illusion of occasional intelligence, avoiding you when they come from behind and avoiding obstacles, although they do drift left to right all over the road a lot. There are also a decent number of competing cars with 19 opponents in each race (although all of them are white), which is a treat to see at the start of the race when you all line up at the starting grid. A good start can gain valuable positions, giving Lotus a great sense of actually racing instead of just overtaking endless opponents like some other games. One thing I did notice though is all of these cars never actually overtake each other. They will simply race up to each other but then back off, so while it feels like you yourself are racing, it never really feels like there is an actual race going on around you.





In game advertising of another game. It's like that movie Inception!



Auto-reverse and music-search cassette deck! Phwooooar! How far we have come...





It's the battle for last place! Who will reign supreme? Maybe if they get out of first gear!





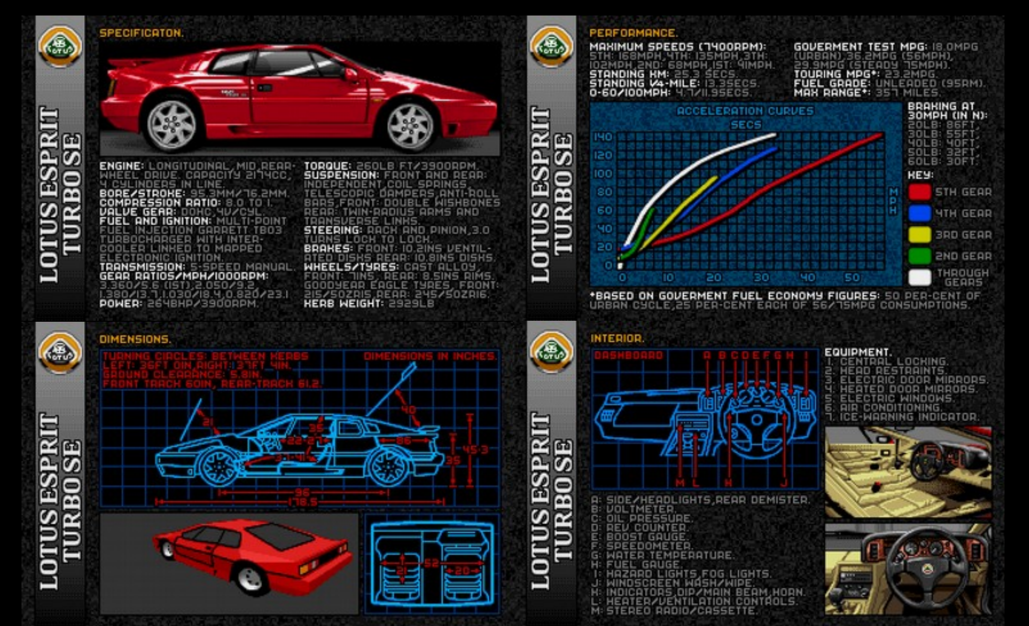
This is your pit crew? Not the most professional looking bunch are they?



There is a good variety of tracks on offer, with some very short simple tracks to long winding race tracks through rolling hills. Each has a similar feel and look, but with good use of colours, varying objects and different obstacles to avoid on some tracks, it keeps any track from feeling repetitive. Some will have rocks on the inside lane, or barriers for road works appearing from each side, and while the first couple of times you will find yourself crashing into these you will soon learn each track so you will be racing like a pro! At the start-finish line, each track also has a pit lane to pull into for refuelling. You can wait until you have a safe full tank, or take a risk with a quick splash and dash, but annoyingly while you have to pull in for fuel, you will never see any of your opponents pulling in as they scream past you.

Two player mode is a lot of fun. Not only does it offer great close racing, but the required pit stops on some tracks add another element of fun to the race. If you pit too short, you may run out of gas just before the finish line with your friend taking the win (and gloating privileges). Or fill up too long, and your winning position may be lost as they zip past you sitting in the pit lane. It's also great fun when you hear their fuel warning beeping away as you pray for them to run out!

Overall Lotus looks great! The rolling presentation at the start of the game looks like one of those 90s ring binder information booklets, giving you detailed photos of the interior and exterior of your shiny red Lotus, while also giving you graphs and detailed specifications for rev heads to drool over. Menus are simple and bold while the obligatory in car CD player makes an appearance to choose an in-game music track. Unfortunately, it’s all music or sound effects, never both. As mentioned already the tracks look really good, and I am happy to say it runs silky smooth even when there are a lot of cars on screen. A neat addition is also when you pull in for a pit stop, you get a side on view of your car and pit crew (very dodgy looking mechanics I have to say) as your fuel gauge slowly fills up. But here comes my biggest gripe with the game. When you play a single player game, the bottom half of the screen where the second player would normally view their car is taken up by the aforementioned pit crew and car, so you never get full screen in single player mode. Always only half screen. Frustrating! A shame, as it would look fantastic in full screen.



Who needs an owners manual when you have this game? Now I know where all the switches are!





Music is one of those early rock attempts, and while it's not a bad example, there are no tunes that really stick in your mind like that classic outrun theme. Sound effects are also good, but far from memorable. From vacuum cleaner engine sounds to generic crashing and screeching sounds, it all feels a little bland. While it may sound like I have a lot of gripes with Lotus, the truth is it is a fantastic racing game and deserving addition to any racing game fans collection. A great challenge by yourself, and even more fun with a friend! One of the best racing games on the Amiga, if a little flawed.

Lotus Turbo Esprit Challenge

GOLD!

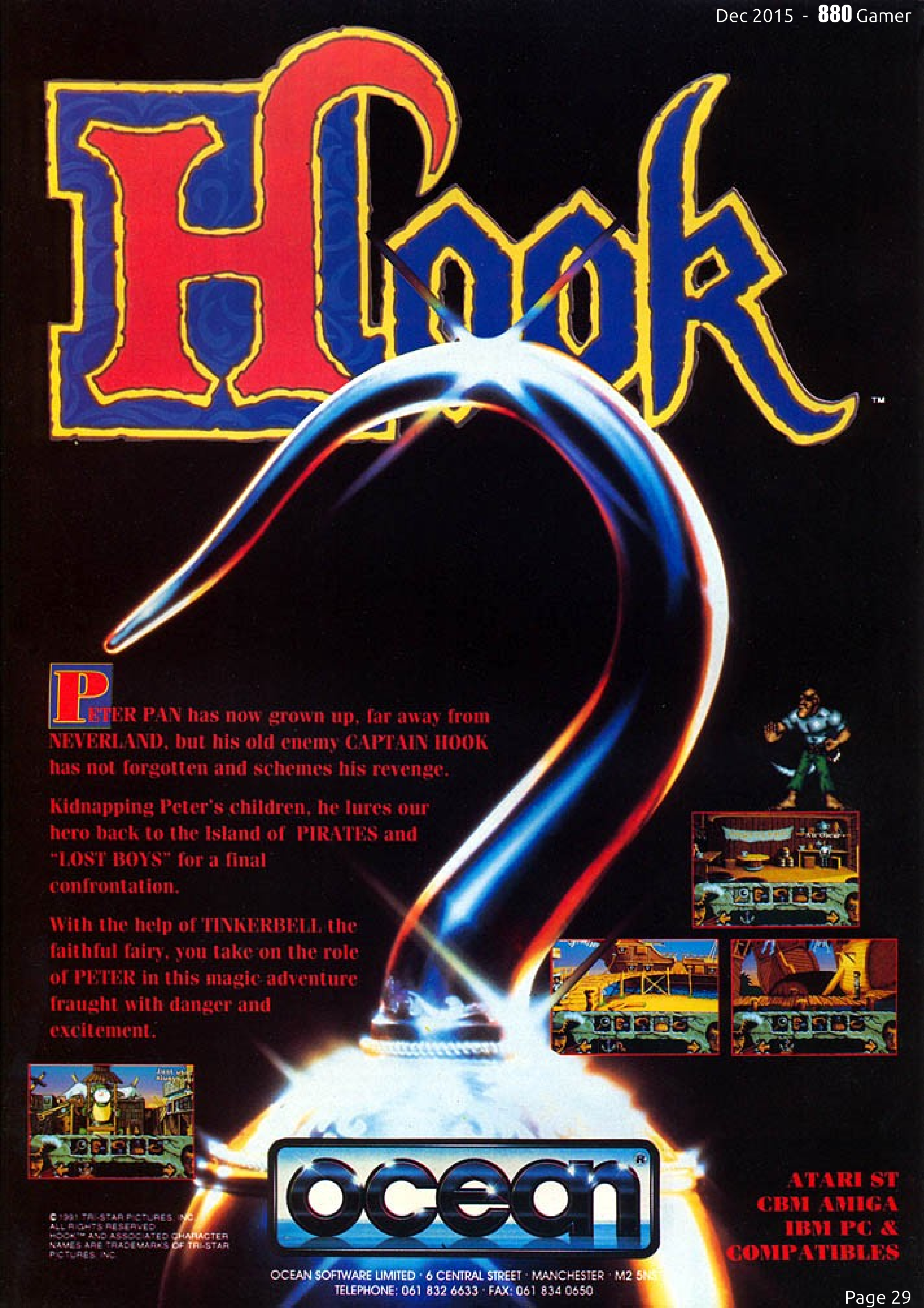
A500 - 1990

GRAPHICS	86%
SOUND	72%
GAMEPLAY	93%

A great racing game that truly shines when playing with a friend. A pity single player is limited to half screen only.

SCORE 90%





Hook™
PETER PAN has now grown up, far away from NEVERLAND, but his old enemy CAPTAIN HOOK has not forgotten and schemes his revenge.
Kidnapping Peter's children, he lures our hero back to the Island of PIRATES and "LOST BOYS" for a final confrontation.
With the help of TINKERBELL the faithful fairy, you take on the role of PETER in this magic adventure fraught with danger and excitement.
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A500 - Doomark - 1988

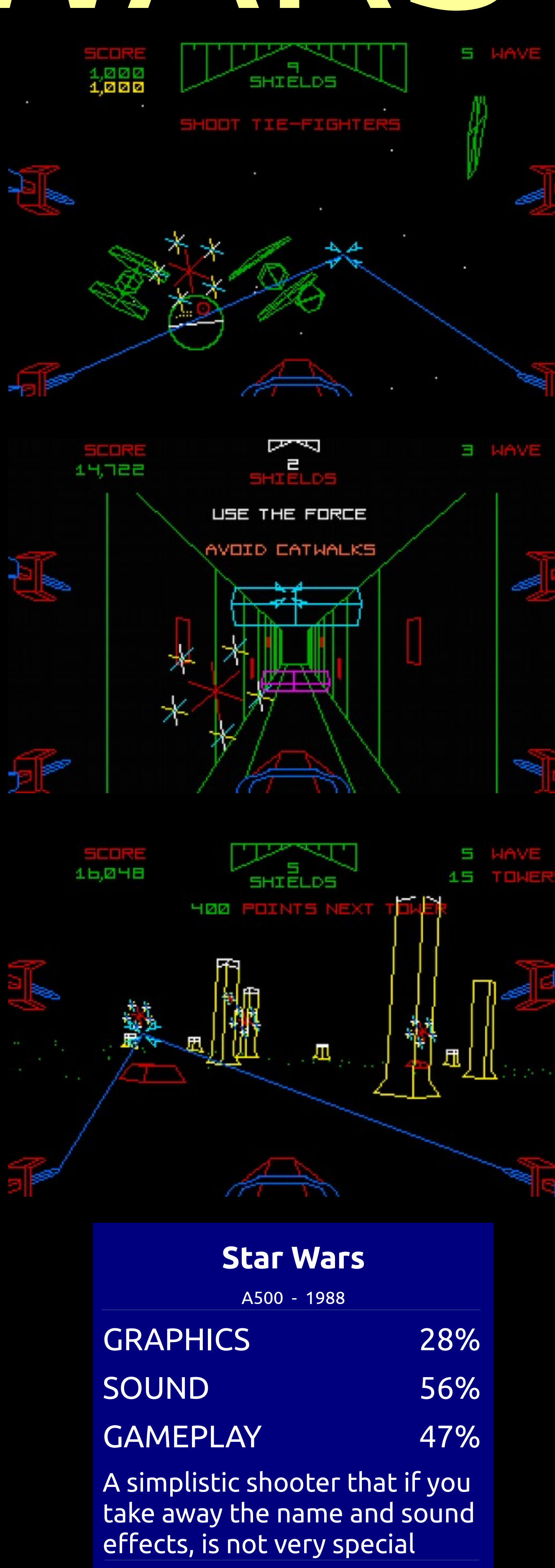
STAR WARS

A long time ago in a galaxy far far away, space battles were fought with colourful wireframe spaceships, with the ever threat of been killed with deadly snowflakes. The year was 1983, and the arcade game based on a small movie you may have heard about recently called Star Wars was released, and some five years later it received the Amiga conversion treatment. With the Star Wars hype machine now in full effect as the 7th instalment is released, let us go back and have a look at one of the earliest Star Wars games ever released.

Star Wars is a very basic wireframe 3D shooter where you pilot one of the X-Wing fighter ships (presumably Luke's) during the final battle against the Death Star. This is broken into three small stages which consists of shooting Tie Fighters as you approach the Death Star, flying low over the surface shooting towers, and finally the iconic trench scene where you have to avoid obstacles until delivering the final blow destroying the Death Star. I recommend using a mouse to play this game for better shooting accuracy as other control methods leave a lot to be desired.

All of this action is delivered in colourful wireframe 3D in first-person view, which at the time of its release in the arcade was probably mind blowing, but if I am completely honest, even by the time it came out on the Amiga it was already starting to feel dated, and by today's standards it's almost fashionable again because of its extreme retro look. The strange part is the enemies shoot 'fireballs' which actually look more like snowflakes, very odd when in the movie they are all shooting exciting lasers beams! While the conversion of the 3D graphics is extremely close to the original arcade machine (some frame rate drops prevent it from been perfect), the sound receives some improvements with clearer sampled speech direct from the movie which is nice, but unfortunately they did not take the opportunity to improve the original Star Wars music which is still atrocious.

Because this game was originally created for arcade machines, it can be forgiven for its somewhat short play time, but if I am completely honest I would have still felt upset if I paid full price for this game only to find I could complete it in around 2 and half minutes before it simply loops back to the start. They do include three difficulty levels which differ slightly, but nothing that would increase the longevity of the game. It's fun for a quick blast, but you will soon tire of its repetitive and short gameplay, and this is where the problem lies... Star Wars is an almost arcade perfect conversion of a game that frankly was not that great to start with, and a missed opportunity to create something amazing from one of the biggest movies of all time. Still, at least it was spared from a special edition filled with unwanted George Lucas remastered CGI effects, so we can still enjoy a universe where Han shot first!



Star Wars

A500 - 1988

GRAPHICS	28%
SOUND	56%
GAMEPLAY	47%

A simplistic shooter that if you take away the name and sound effects, is not very special

SCORE	49%

Bleeding eyes ><



> The Demos <

Impassioned

Onslaught - OCS (512K) - 2015

Women looking at you sensually, dancing seductively, singing, and some questionable cleavage shots. Impassioned certainly got my attention! But it's not all cheap thrills as this is in fact a technically impressive demo, showcasing some very impressive compression techniques both visually and musically.

There are three parts to this production. The first opens with some nice compressed video, along with neat effects including a silhouetted dancer nod to the classic State of The Art, finishing off on some impressive morphing faces. It's all pretty neat with no dull or drawn out moments.

The second half then throws us into a music film clip with fully digitised video and soundtrack. I really enjoyed this part because the music is cool and synced with the video very well, and with the high compression (both sonically and visually) along with grainy effects added to smooth things out, it almost feels like you have stumbled across an old VHS tape from the 80's where you just can't quite get the tracking right!

The end part is just a nice small chiptune with text over another quality image. On the subject of music, the first half while maybe a technical achievement, I kind of wish they had gone with a more traditional composed tune as it just lacks the clarity you come to expect. Also, the first and second half are reasonable quiet, while the chiptune then blasts at you at the end because you turned the volume up so loud!

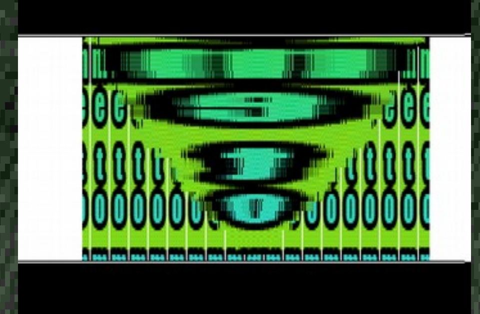
There is one last thing that makes this demo truly stand out, and that is the fact it runs on an A500 with only 512k. Seriously, if it was not mentioned, I would have instantly thought this is a 1mb demo minimum. All this on a single 880k disk. Now that is impressive!

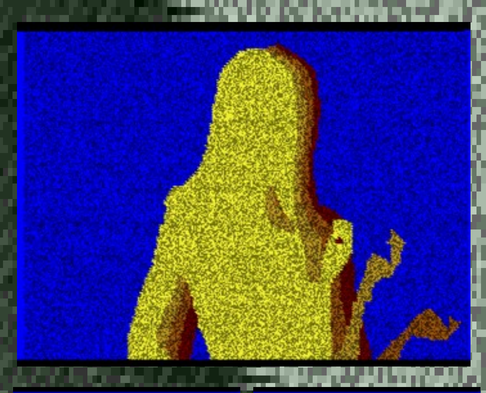
90%

























IRAQ-DEMO

Animators - OCS - 1990

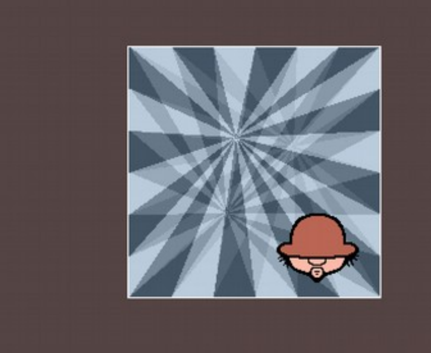
I am sure if I had seen this demo when I first got my Amiga, I probably would have loved it! I guess it was a simpler time back then and I was easily amused, but while this is amusing on a very basic level, it ultimately lacks any real substance and pretty much consists of the following: Saddam Hussein rolls out in his tank flattening anyone in his way, who is then met by an American tank. They exchange fire, throw a bomb, and fly up to heaven... roll on the scroll text!

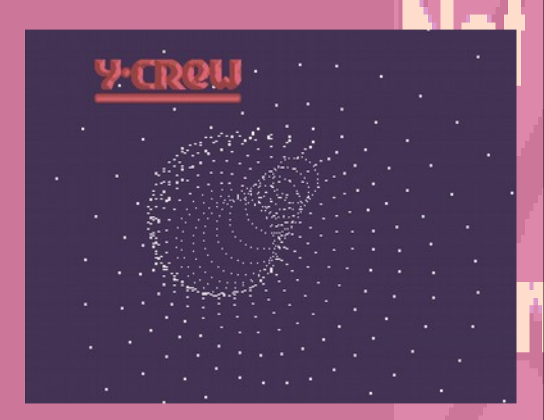
The cartoon and animation look good, and everything moves nice and smooth, but the music leaves a lot to be desired and it is too short to be enjoyable. The end credits actually last longer than the main feature. Loading screens also pop up between parts disrupting the flow of the demo. It's a short and simple animation with very basic humour, and that's about it!

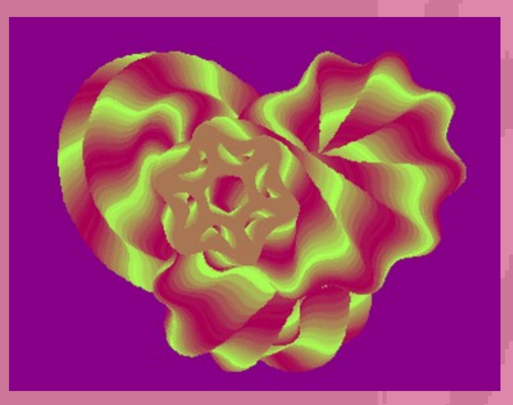


Y-Crew - OCS - 2014

VERTIGO



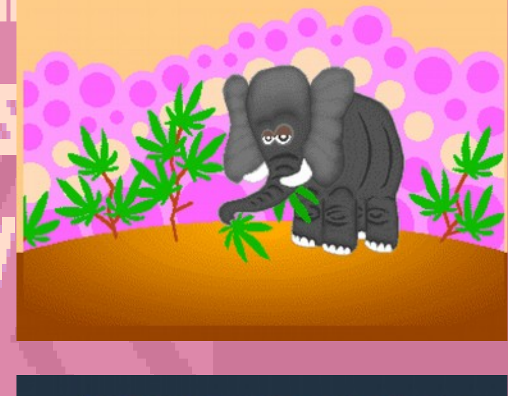




Mellowed out tunes backed up with mellow visuals, and one elephant tripping out after eating some rather suspicious looking green plants. That is pretty much what you are getting with Vertigo from Y-Crew. Don't come here looking for new effects or world records because you will be disappointed, but if you are looking for a light-hearted and a fun demo that ties together some polished effects with a cute and consistent style throughout, then this is well worth checking out.

It's nice to see a demo that has a clear direction in how it wants to look transitioning smoothly through each section, while maintaining its overall style and colours right up to the end credits. While I enjoyed its mix of bright colours and pastels, I felt the music was a little weaker than I had hoped, and while not entirely disconnected, it did not quite suit the demo I felt. Even with this one small disappointment, this is still a great little demo that is guaranteed to bring a smile to your face.









72%

UNIVERSE

Take Boris Verne, a uniquely ordinary guy...

One minute he's sitting quietly at his 35-bit Excellence Engine home computer. The next he's being transported to another dimension by his eccentric uncle's Virtual Dimension Inducer!

Imagine how he feels when he emerges from a rip in the space-time continuum into an unknown dimension...

Encounter weird alien worlds and their even wierder alien inhabitants! Guide Boris on an action-packed chase across the gulfs of space to find a fabled lost star. Help him find the key to defeating the evil Golden King who rules his

UNIVERSE!

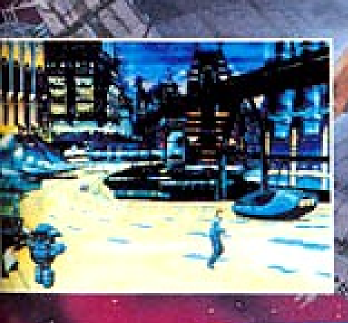
Rotoscoped game character, with real-time scaling and over 500 frames of animation...

Lush, 256-colour hand-painted scenes teeming with background animations...

Feel the sense of total immersion in this parallel universe, enhanced by atmospheric, mood-responsive music...









Available on: Amiga (compatible with 500, 600 and 1200), Amiga CD32, PC and PC CD ROM



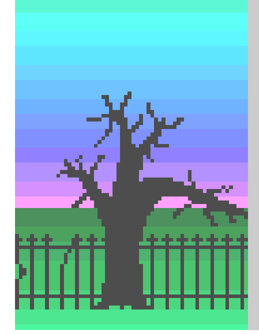




55 Ashbourne Road Derby DE22 3FS Telephone (0332) 297797 Facsimile (0332) 381511

880 cheat!

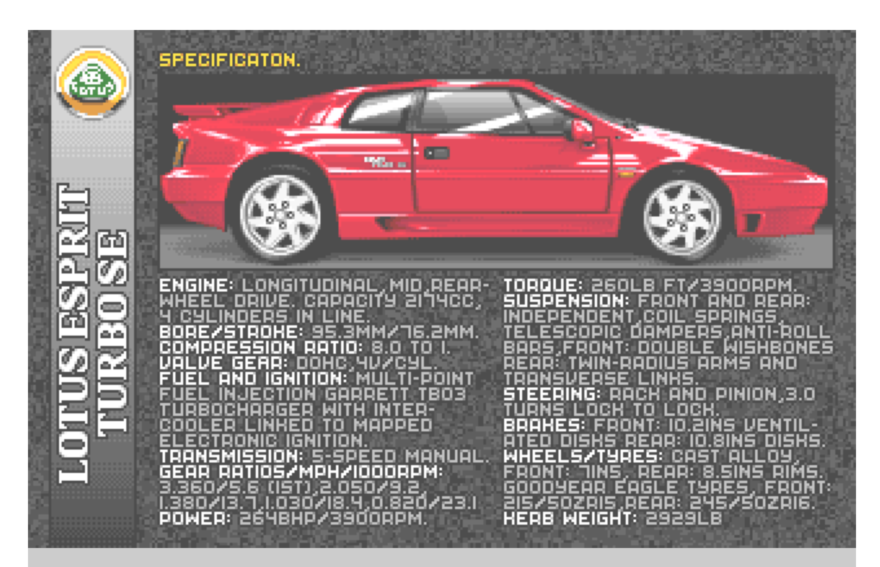
Why play clean when you can play dirty! Let us help you...



BELIAL

Look, the game is crap and very hard. I actually recommend you use this cheat if you insist on playing it, that way it will minimise your time and exposure to this carcinogenic game.

Pause game play and type **satan** to enable cheat mode. Press **O** while the game is paused to disable sprite collision. The bottom of the screen will flash green to confirm correct code entry. To resume to normal mode, press **I** while the game is paused. The bottom of the screen will flash red to confirm correct code entry.



LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE

Even with all that boost, you still may be having trouble proving that red cars always go faster in this high octane racing game! So why not fill up on some jet fuel to give you an upper hand. Simply enter your names as follows

Always qualify:
Begin a game in two player mode. Enter **IN A BIG COUNTRY** as a name for player one and **FIELDS OF FIRE** as a name for player two.

Bonus race:
Begin a game in two player mode. Enter **MONSTER** as a name for player one and **SEVENTEEN** as a name for player two.



TEARAWAY THOMAS

Thomas may be one tough hot dog, but at the end of the day he cannot beat the theory of relativity with time always against him. But why not prove Einstein wrong and bend the laws of the universe with an unlimited time cheat!

Unlimited lives
Type - **life is too short**

Invincibility
Type - **iron man thomas**

Cursor Up / Cursor Down selects levels
Type - **any level**

Unlimited time
Type - **timeflieslikeabanana**

Disable all active cheats
Type - **normal**

880 talk back!

Sifting through the spam, we bring you the least scam related letters

Hi there Mark.
For my peoples choice hat entry I would like to request the grand daddy of all AMIGA 500 games the pack ins collection of Cartoon Classics with included the tool Deluxe Paint III and the games Captain Planet, The Simpsons Bart Vs The Space Mutants and the almighty Lemmings which was the game that made the good pack as a whole even better into one of the best packs ever next to it's rival the SNES that is because of course getting Super Mario Kart and StarWing as pack in titles was slightly better but for the AMIGA I think that pack ins set was great value for money and deserves a score based on the pack as a whole.

As there are 4 programmes to talk about in the pack the maths to get the pack amount of score would be the scores from each installments devided by how many (4) but it would make a really good review for my fan request for the fan requests thing you talked about in the back mate.
Daniel.

As the rules state only one reader request an issue this would not be possible, but as it's Christmas and we have no good ideas of our own... why not!? Reviewing one of the Amiga Packs is not something I had ever really thought about doing, and thinking about it I don't think I ever came across a pack review in one of the Magazines from the day, so this is a neat idea and you will find it in this issue. Hope you like it! Remember, anyone else who wants a reader request can simply send us an email and let us know what you would like to see in the mag!

Morning Mark,
Here's a photo of your 880 Gamer mags all printed as requested.
I much prefer a hard copy don't you 😀
Issue 7 was excellent as always. It's made me want to get my miggy set up and give Frontier a proper go.
Anyway I mustn't keep you from writing issue 8, chop chop 😀
Baz



It's so awesome to see the magazine in actual hard copy print! I am wondering if I can print the whole collection myself and claim them all on tax somehow. Hmmm... Frontier is such a big game and you can sink a lot of time into it! As I only got to play this on my humble A500 back in the day I was used to 1 frame a minute, so getting to play it on some powerful hardware made for a nice change and found myself getting sucked back into it! Issue 8 almost did not happen before x-mas due to time constraints, but because you gave me the 'chop chop' I thought I better get my butt in gear and get issue 8 out! So here it is! Hope you like it, and have another hard copy to add to your collection soon!

Hi,
I would like a end of the year request of your top amiga games of the year. This would be a great review for end of year articles. I will share this book with my friends. As I spread the name of Amiga in the Washington D.C area. Look forward to the fun reading articles.

Roosevelt

End of year awards show with top Amiga games of the year sounds like a great idea to me, we are just trying to secure a B-grade celebratory to host the awards night in our spider infested shed! Keep spreading the word of Amiga and brainwash as many people as possible to join our cult!

Hi Mark,
Thanks for issue 7 of "880 Gamer".
By the way: there is "September 2015" sign on the cover, but inside it's "September 2014" on every page :)
Piotr

I can't believe this managed to slip past our stringent quality control checks. This is an outrage! I would like to inform you that all the staff here at 880Gamer have been punished appropriately involving been stripped of all clothing, smearing of honey on all sensitive areas and then forced to lay down in the biggest ant nest we could find. Oddly, the editor did not want to get up when we told him it was over choosing to stay there with a big smile on his face. So we just left the freak behind and went back to the office.

Remember, feel free to drop us a quick email or anything of interest at :
880Gamer@gmail.com
Thanks to everyone for your comments and support!

>>next issue

WAR!



NEVER BEEN SO MUCH FUN!

I would like to acknowledge the following people / groups / software / sites for making 880 Gamer possible :

Codetapper – For putting up with my terrible spelling and grammar by helping out with proofreading the majority of articles.
Ubuntu – 880 and emulation is run on Ubuntu, along with use of the Ubuntu font used within 880 Gamer
FS-UAE – A big thanks to Frode Solheim and the UAE team for bringing great Amiga emulation to Ubuntu
WHDLoad - Bert Jahn's masterpiece, making disk swap-less dreams come true
The GIMP / Fotowall – All image manipulation powered by the gimp and his full leather suit, with awesome help also from Fotowall!
LibreOffice – 880 is fully written up and saved in PDF using LibreOffice Writer .. and its free just like 880 Gamer!
Lemon Amiga – Thanks for their wonderful website where some information is gathered.
EAB – For helping spread the word of 880 Magazine, and good sports when finding one of many errors in each issue!
ADA – Both to the Amiga Demo Archive site and all of those that keep the scene alive and pumping to this day!
HOL / Amiga Magazine Rack– Some Cover disk ADF files and information gathered from these wonderful sites
The Amiga – An eternal thanks to Jay Miner and the amazing Amiga team that built this great machine

IK+

'THE ULTIMATE MARTIAL ARTS SIMULATION'





IK+ is now available in 16 bit format as a follow up to its No. 1 chart position on the Commodore 64.

Archer MacLean, the creator of the original IK, has completely rewritten and vastly improved the game to make IK+ the ultimate martial arts simulation.

It features super smooth animation, instant response and extremely addictive all round playability. And what's more every head-butt, face slap and gut punch is accompanied by life-like digitised sound effects.

IK+ contains superb graphics and a great deal of attention has been put into the fully animated sunset – right down to the leaves falling from the tree and piling up on the ground. The fighters' shadows are even slanting away from the sun. In addition there are dozens of features, adjustable by keyboard, such as the game speed, the music volume and various secret codes.

So, if you are ready for the ultimate in Martial Arts, IK+ is for you!

Now available for the Amiga at £24.99, also available on C64 cassette and disk, Spectrum, Amstrad cassette and disk, and Atari ST.

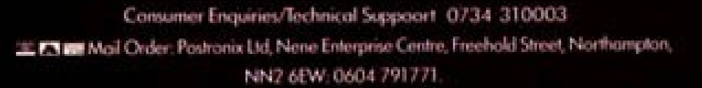




Amiga screen shots shown

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Consumer Enquiries/Technical Suppoort 0734 310003

Mail Order: Postronix Ltd, Nene Enterprise Centre, Freehold Street, Northampton, NN2 6EW: 0604 791771.